

CITY OF MUSKEGON
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES

September 6, 2016

Chairperson J. Hilt called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Hilt, A. Riegler, S. Radtke, S. Kroes, D. Warren, K. Panozzo, L. Wood.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: M. Franzak, H. Mitchell

OTHERS PRESENT: V. Luthy, Muskegon County Lead Program, 173 E Apple Ste. 104; T. Macallister, 458 W. Webster; D. Kamps, Step Up, 1319 Peck.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of August 2, 2016 was made by J. Hilt, supported by K. Panozzo and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Case 2016-15 – 1341 4th Street. Applicant: Andrea Harmon. District: Campus. Current Function: Residential. The applicant is seeking approval to wrap the soffit and fascia in the rear of the home with aluminum trim. Squirrels have chewed through the soffit at the rear of the home.

V. Luthy stated that they have been working on getting the lead abated and there had been three generations of children that have lived in the structure that have had elevated lead levels. There are funds between the County and the State that will paint the home. The City had replaced the roof in 2014 and they had replaced sections of the wood soffit at that time that had since been chewed through. There have been bats in the home, which transmit rabies and are a public health hazard.

D. Warren arrived at 4:03 p.m.

V. Luthy stated that they were looking for a more permanent solution to keep the wildlife out of the home by looking for material that is harder to chew through. They have looked at steel, aluminum, etc. as opposed to wood for a substitution. A. Riegler had asked if they had looked at any PVC trail product. V. Luthy stated that between the State and the County, they are looking at investing over \$30,000 worth of work into the home. PVC is more expensive so they were looking at other materials as they are over budget already. A. Riegler believed that the PVC wasn't much more expensive than the other materials discussed. V. Luthy added that the PVC also wasn't squirrel-proof. There had been squirrels chewing through the materials used in the past as there are large oak trees in the back of the home with the branches over the roof of the home. This makes it easier for the squirrels to drop down onto the roof and chew the materials to gain entry into the home.

S. Radtke arrived at 4:07 p.m.

V. Luthy gave a synopsis of the home with the addition of the garage in the back. The garage was added prior to the establishment of the Historic District. There was further discussion with how the home sits on a small lot with the area in question located at the rear of the home, which isn't easily seen from the street. The decorative areas in the front of the home will follow the normal historic preservation practices. MOCAP had also been out and performed the weather protection program when it came to the eaves.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to wrap the soffit and fascia in the rear of the home with aluminum trim as proposed, provided, it meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained, was made by A. Riegler, supported by D. Warren and unanimously approved.

Case 2016-16 – Clay and Webster between 5th and 6th Streets. Applicant: Heritage Village Committee of Nelson Neighborhood Association. District: Downtown Structures. Current Function: Residential. The committee is seeking approval to retrofit the existing streetlight poles with new LED fixtures. Most of the poles are in the City right-of-way; however, some are located on private property.

T. Macallister gave the history of the installation from the early 70's and 80's. They will be using the same poles and dealing only with what is currently there. They are looking at changing the light fixture itself which will match what is currently downtown now. A. Riegler clarified that the poles would be the same, the lights are currently off, change the light fixtures themselves and there is no way to retrofit the current fixture. T. Macallister stated that the lights were shut off in 2013 and they had looked at retrofitting the current light fixtures. Currently this proposal will match the ones on Western Avenue. There was discussion on why the lights had been turned off in 2013.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to retrofit the existing light poles in Heritage Village with new LED fixtures as proposed, provided, it meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained, was made by L. Wood, supported by S. Kroes and unanimously approved.

Case 2016-17 – 1135 5th Street. Applicant: Clemente Coulombe. District: Current Function: Residential. The applicant is seeking approval to replace the basement windows with glass block windows for efficiency and security reasons. A neighbor had the block style windows and pictures were provided to the members for review.

A. Riegler asked if the windows were in the front of the home. M. Franzak stated that they were both on the side of the home. These were proposed to the owner's rental property. The members discussed the style of the block windows and the use or purpose of the windows. Since these are in the basement there was question about what the use was in the basement as egress windows would be required if the basement had been used for living purposes.

A motion that the HDC approve the request replace the basement windows with glass block windows as proposed, with the original openings being maintained, provided, it meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained, was made by D. Warren, supported by L. Wood and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Case 2016-11 – 1319 Peck Street. Applicant: Step Up. District: Clinton-Peck. Current Function: Office. This case had been before the members July 5, 2016 and was tabled. This was to allow the

owners to submit estimates comparing the cost of vinyl siding versus the cost of repairing and repainting the wood.

D. Kamps stated that it would cost \$12,700 to paint the structure which would last less than 10 years. The three or four-inch vinyl siding would cost \$25,000 to \$35,000 and would last a lot longer. D. Warren had read the additional comments that were made at the August 2, 2016 meeting from the minutes (where the applicant was not in attendance) due to the concerns that this home is significant to the neighborhood and they were concerned that if vinyl siding were approved; others would follow suit. D. Kamps brought in pictures of adjacent homes that had siding on them currently. A. Riegler added that the home next door to this is significantly less historic and has siding. The area to look at is the architecture which shows the historic significance. S. Kroes brought up a home in the Jefferson Historic District has vinyl siding. There was discussion among the members adding that this home had the siding installed prior to it becoming an historic district and wasn't approved after. S. Kroes stated that it vinyl siding can be installed and look attractive. A. Riegler brought up the State Guidelines for siding and how it is not allowed. L. Wood did not have a problem with siding as long as the historic features were repaired/remained. A. Riegler stated that she would have to vote against the vinyl siding due to the concerns of the architecture disappearing if sided. Discussion of the board members continued discussing the difference between when to use siding versus when not to use or allow it. M. Franzak provided an example of a structure and there wasn't any historical value on the structure so siding had been approved. Discussion continued as to whether or not to table this case so further research and information may be obtained or to proceed and make a motion so the application could proceed with his renovations.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to cover the existing wood siding with vinyl as proposed with all architectural features being saved, provided, it meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained, was made by L. Wood, supported by S. Kroes and approved with J. Hilt, A. Riegler, and S. Radke voting nay.

OTHER BUSINESS

345 Houston Avenue. Applicant: Teresa Cunningham. District: Houston. Current Function: Residential. This case was brought before the board because the owner would like to erect a storage shed. The shed would be above grade and the siding would match the home, but the placement of the siding may look different as the homeowner had been looking at having the siding going slanted rather than straight across.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to install a shed with siding that will match the home in color, provided all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained, was made by S. Radke, supported by D. Warren and unanimously approved.

Aluminum/Vinyl siding or windows – T. Macallister spoke in regards to aluminum or vinyl siding or windows. He stated that it detracted from the historical significance of the homes and should not be allowed. Historical homes should adhere to the standards provided in the Historic District Standards.

Historic District Standards – The board would like the standards included in their next meeting packet for discussion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.